



# Transcript

National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

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## NATIONAL GUARD ON-THE-RECORD ZOOM/TELEPHONIC MEDIA ROUNDTABLE

July 16, 2021

TOPIC	SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS
State National Guards' Mitigation Efforts Due to Funding Deficit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Air Force Major General Richard R. Neely, Adjutant General, Illinois National Guard</li><li>▪ Army Brigadier General R. Dale Lyles, Adjutant General, Indiana National Guard</li><li>▪ Army Brigadier General John J. Driscoll, Land Component Commander, Massachusetts Army National Guard</li><li>▪ Army Brigadier General Craig W. Strong, Vice Director of Programs and Resources/Comptroller on the Chief of the National Guard Bureau's Joint Staff.</li></ul>

### Background:

The National Guard used fiscal year 2021 funding to pay for the operational Capitol response from January to May. By cash flowing the money, it ensured the Soldiers and Airmen who volunteered for the mission were paid. The nearly \$521 million cost of that mission is still a deficit against our budget. Without the reimbursement funding, the National Guard may need to curtail or reduce its drill weekends, annual training, and operations and maintenance for the months of August and September.

### Dialogue:

[Name]

[QUESTION/RESPONSE]

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:00:01]

Good afternoon and thank you for joining us. My name is Nahaku MacFadden and I'm from the National Guard Bureau Public Affairs, and I'm going to be moderating this media roundtable on the state National Guard's mitigation efforts due to a funding deficit. So we have several National Guard



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senior leaders that will discuss the impacts on training and readiness and if reimbursement funds are not received. This event is scheduled for approximately forty five minutes and is on the record today. We have Air Force Major General Richard R. Neely, Adjutant General, Illinois National Guard. We also have Army Brigadier General, R. Dale Lyles Adjutant General, Indiana National Guard, Army Brigadier General John Driscoll, Land Component Commander, Massachusetts Army National Guard. And we have Army Brigadier General Craig Strong, Vice Director of Programs and Resources Comptroller National Guard Bureau. Before we begin, I ask that you all remain on mute until I call on you for your question. When asking a question, please identify yourself and your outlet and limit to your best one question. We have a lot of media that RSVP today and we want to try to ensure that we get through as many of each of your questions as possible. If we have time, we will open it up to those who may have and want to ask another question. Each general will provide some brief on the record comments regarding their state National Guard's response and in the Zoom chat, their bios are attached. So following their comments, we'll take your questions with that. I'm going to turn it over to Air Force Major General Richard Neely, Adjutant General of Illinois National Guard. Sir.

**Maj Gen Rich Neely** [00:01:50]

Well, good afternoon, Major General Rich Neely in general for Illinois and the commander of the Illinois National Guard. And thank you all for joining us to talk about the unfortunate federal funding issues affecting the National Guard today. I will be speaking specifically about the impacts for the state of Illinois and the Illinois National Guard.



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However, those impacts will be the same for all other states and territories and the District of Columbia. The National Guard has not been reimbursed for the capital response mission that started on six January and continued to almost the end of May. The reimbursement of the five hundred and twenty one million or five hundred and twenty point nine million has been mired in Congress. To ensure the National Guard could continue to operate, the National Guard bureau took risk several large accounts expecting the reimbursement. They use that funding to push to the states so we could continue to operate. However, time is running out in these accounts must be funded through the end of the fiscal year to ensure the National Guard does not have an Antideficiency Act violation. To that end, we have been notified, the adjutant generals of the National Guard, that the National Guard will begin pulling back unobligated funds to close this funding gap, to reimburse those accounts that must be paid. The Illinois National Guard faces a potential funding shortfall of thirty one million dollars across multiple accounts. Please remember the Illinois National Guard, much like all the other states, answered the call to duty three separate times for the capital response mission. It committed more than eight hundred servicemembers. This is in addition to the more than three thousand Illinois National Guard members who have been called to duty over the last 18 months for the covid-19 response, along with more than a thousand excuse me, over a thousand soldiers and airmen who have served overseas in harm's way in the hundreds that have been placed on state active duty for emergencies within Illinois. Now, after everything our troops have done, everything their families have sacrificed. The Illinois National Guard may be



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required to cancel August and September, a weekend for thirteen thousand soldiers and airmen, cancel upcoming annual training events, furlough over one thousand federal civilian employees, ground aircraft, which will cause pilots to lose critical flight readiness ratings, cancel essential military schools, pull transportation. I could go on and on, but you understand the significant impacts that this funding shortfall will have. The loss of these funds will have major impact on our readiness, both for our federal missions and for state emergencies here in the state of Illinois. It would also have a personal impact on both our traditional National Guard soldiers and airmen in our full time workforce. Most of these traditional soldiers and airmen would lose two months of drill pay, which many of these troops and their families depend on. These troops and their families would incur a debt to the government because of this military insurance, life insurance and Tricare health insurance come out of the service members military pay. Younger National Guard members have deductions such as there for the military blended retirement systems as well. All of these payments would fail for two months behind in creating significant debt that would be recouped later. Other National Guard members could lose a good year towards their retirement. There are multiple and cascading effects of canceling drills and annual training. These effects on our full time force would be terrible as well. It would be punishing the force that has worked extremely hard in the last year, the last two years, in fact, to ensure the National Guard is always ready and always there when our nation in our community needs us. Given what the National Guard has done in the last 18 months, we would be sending a terrible message to thousands of



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dedicated men and women of the Illinois National Guard who have taken the oath to support and defend the Constitution. They acted honorably. They upheld their oaths countless times. And in some of the most difficult situations, it's time for the federal government to keep its promise. I'm hopeful the situation can be resolved before the funds are pulled back at the start of August. Our guardsmen who have worked so hard over the last 18 months deserve better. Again, thank you for your time and thank you for joining us today.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:06:56]

Thank you, sir. General Lyles, do you have your opening statement?

**Brig Gen Dale Lyles** [00:07:03]

Thank you, I do. I'm General Dale Lyles, I'm the Adjutant General for the Indiana National Guard and I will just echo what General Neely said. Certainly everything that is impacting the state of Illinois is also impacting the state of Indiana. So what I'll do is just highlight three things within the state of Indiana that I think are very detrimental to our readiness center, our ability to support both our federal and our state missions. So a lack of reimbursement for the things that we cash flow for Operation Capital Response will negatively impact what we have programed in planned for August and September. And primarily what that means is it will further degrade the Indiana National Guard's readiness on the heels of an already degraded readiness state because of covid and our inability to train collectively. So we have the fifty fourth Security Forces Assistance Brigade that is teed up to start training at the Joint Readiness Training Center next month for an overseas deployment. That particular training exercise is at risk right now because it may have to be canceled in order to



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properly pay other accounts. And so our federal mission to deploy OCONUS will be at risk as well as we have companies that are getting ready to start being trained for a border mission. Those missions are also at risk because of the inability to train in August and September. These lost training opportunities could potentially place our soldiers and our airmen in harm's way and not being trained at a level proficiency that I would deem necessary to deploy them. Additionally, the inability to train our Guardsmen on Drill weekend in August and September degrades our governors ability to deploy us domestically in the face of a manmade or natural disaster within our state because we do not have the opportunity to train our National Guard reactionary forces in August and September as well. And I'll tell you Rich hit on this a little bit from the TAG from Illinois. The impact on our soldiers and our families is going to be very drastic because our soldiers, our airmen rely on predictability. So do our civilian employers. So our soldiers and airmen must know when they're going to train in August and September in order to allow their employers and their families to know that so that they can set aside the proper time to allow them to train without disrupting their place of employment. In addition, our soldiers rely on their paychecks in August and September in order to pay their mortgage, to pay their car payment and to pay their family expenses. And without that paycheck, it will put them in harm's way. And so those are just three things that I would highlight that will impact the National Guard, both the Army and the Air National Guard, in addition to what Rich outlined. The tag from Illinois. Thank you.



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**Nahaku McFadden** [00:10:13]

Thank you, sir. General Driscoll, do you have anything to add?

**Brig Gen John Driscoll** [00:10:17]

Yes, good afternoon. On behalf of Major General Gary Keefe, the Adjutant General of the state of Massachusetts, I am Brigadier General John Driscoll. I am the Land Component Commander, the Army Guard Commander for the Massachusetts Army National Guard. And just to echo a little bit on the readiness piece, to sum it up, as Napoleon said, you can ask me for anything except time. But that time, if we can't train in August and September, we can never get back. And to bring it down to those families, because as I look at it, we're really straining the trust of the families and the employers because our soldiers are the key, just as General Lyles said, it's predictability. They plan their years just like we plan our training around these dates. And unfortunately, now that at the last minute we have to cancel that. And again, it really strains the trust we have with our families and their soldiers and their employers. And again, it's very tough to get back. I'm sure we will. But one more call. We're always ready, always there. And I can speak to a little bit from the ground perspective because I was at Task Force Capitol Grounds Commander. I had the privilege to lead the soldiers of Illinois and Indiana down on the Capitol response that were just outstanding. They're motivated. And after this turbulent year in twenty twenty, couldn't get any worse. We double down in twenty twenty one with Operation Capital Response. And just as we come out of this, covert operations are starting to somewhat subside. The soldiers are want to get back together. They can be together, they can train together and really set the conditions for success in twenty, twenty two. And without that ability to do





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that and close out the year strong, we just put us behind and we lose that time. So thank you very much and looking forward to your questions.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:12:03]

Thank you, sir. We're going to start now going through our list. Remember one question and then if we have time, we'll go around and open up for anyone who might have a second question. So I'm going to start off is the CNN Barbara Starr. Did you join us today? Nothing heard. Associated Press Bob Burns. Nothing heard. CNN Jamie Crawford. Nothing heard,

**Barbara Starr - CNN** [00:12:46]

Actually. Can you hear me now? This is Barbara Starr.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:12:49]

Oh, yes, ma'am. Yes, we can hear you now.

**Barbara Starr - CNN** [00:12:51]

I'm sorry we're late. We were having trouble unmuting ourselves because we were late in filing. And, could we just get your assessment of what you are hearing from Congress, any one of you that wishes to respond, what you were hearing from Congress about a possible resolution to this, to you see where do you see the support and who's opposing you?

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:13:16]

A General Neely, would you like to begin?

**Maj Gen Rich Neely** [00:13:19]

Yes, I'd be happy to. Thank you, Ms Starr, for joining us today. This, as we all know, there's some challenges in Congress and working through budget issues. Much like any other year, we're hearing of definite support for the National Guard. There's definite support and appreciation for everything we've done, rather, was the Covid mission or following throughout the year of civil disturbances





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in twenty twenty and and then the response for the Capitol response mission. And so all of that's been very, very favorable. And we couldn't ask for more support from communities across our nation. However, this is just one of those things that in the the budget cycle is got stuck and has not made it through because of many other issues that are pressing in Congress. So, you know, this is the time for the commanders in the field, the Adjutant generals, to highlight this issue. National Guard Bureau has done everything they could do. They've asked for the reimbursement. They try to front the money up front and to provide that for us. And unfortunately, we're at this point now where we have to start looking at what it will take to shut the National Guard down to recover these funds at the end of the year, that they just will not be in our coffers going forward.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:14:49]

Thank you, sir. Any additional generals would like to add anything more to that? General Lyle's.

**Brig Gen Dale Lyles** [00:15:00]

Thank you the Indiana congressional delegation all support the reimbursement of the pay and allowances that we paid for our cash flow, and they all understand the degradation to readiness if they don't do that and they're working very hard inside of Congress to ensure that we get reimbursed. It's also something that we need to be reimbursed, timely, so that we can get these into our accounts in order to assure that we can conduct our August and September pre plan training on the dates that we have set aside to do that. So they're working very hard to do that.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:15:37]

Thank you. Moving on, we're going to Megan Myers from Military Times.



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**Meghann Myers**

**Military Times** [00:15:45]

You mentioned the security forces systems brigade and how that might get hung up. Can anybody break out any more, any missions or training that are Army or Air Force specific and how this lack of funding will affect those different components? If it's different for each one.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:16:06]

General Lyles, would you like to begin?

**Brig Gen Dale Lyles** [00:16:08]

Sure, I'll start. Yeah, so I mentioned the Security Forces Assistance Brigade. We also have an emerging mission along the border that we are going to start training some of the companies and the aviation unit that Indiana is going to supply military police company and an aviation detachment along the border later this fall. And we need to start manning training and equipping those two units in August and September in order to deploy them by October and November. And so our inability to conduct that pre planned training is going to hinder our ability to get them on the border in a timely manner. And then Indiana is also the headquarters company for the security assistance brigade that I mentioned previously. And so that's why I'm familiar with that particular brigade. So for Indiana specifically on the Army side, it relates to that. Additionally, we have a 122nd fighter wing and an intelligence wing in Indiana, and the same things apply to those units. Their ability to conduct flight hours and to participate in their pre-scheduled training is all at risk. So we have 22 A10s at our fighter wing. And those pilots rely on August and September to train in order to maintain proficiency in currency in the aircraft. And all of that is at risk as we speak.



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**Nahaku McFadden** [00:17:37]

Thank you, sir. General Driscoll, how about from Massachusetts?

**Brig Gen John Driscoll** [00:17:41]

So Massachusetts, thank you. Make him for that and kind of bring it down to that soldier level for a couple of reasons. One, we had a battalion scheduled to go to Fort Drum for annual training. And unfortunately, you know, they work all year through their drills. And I use the analogy of a football game. The weekend drills are like the practices and the annual training. That 15 day period is like the game. And of course, the Super Bowl is when you go overseas and trained in the combat. So would they unfortunately have to be pulled from that because they're unable to execute that with paid allowances and the other money to go along with just supporting that and bringing it down to the individual level, not being able to August and September, drill really affects the new Army combat fitness test because the Army set forth by the end of August 31, that we have every soldier has to do a diagnostic army combat fitness test to establish the baseline on where to go from there with us without being able to do that in August. Again, it sets that back now that that's easier to move the dates. But again, you can see the downstream effects of not being able to do the training in August and September.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:18:53]

Thank you, sir. General Neely.

**Maj Gen Rich Neely** [00:18:57]

Yeah, I would just like to pile on a little bit to both General Driscoll and General Lyle's comments. It's about readiness. And I mentioned it a little bit of that in my opening comments, you know, would much like Indiana. We we have two flying wings,



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Air Force flying wings. That and as an operation of the National Guard, as an operational reserve, that means that the United States Air Force, the United States Army count on us to be ready to deploy at a moment's notice around the clock. They count on us to be when they provide us a deployment for the future, they count on us to be prepared to deploy. And so those in the state of Illinois, we KC-135s that refuel all types of aircraft, not just Air Force aircraft, just not Navy, all kinds of different aircraft across the board, and they fly all over the world to do that mission. We have C-130s to do those same things. We have soldiers that, as General Lyles talked about, they're preparing for the Security of Forces Advisory Brigade. They're preparing for future an exercise as well as future deployment possibilities. And so each one of these are significant. And I just revisit not only the unique thing about the National Guard is that we're that one organization that not only has a federal deployed go to war security national security mission, but we also have that mission here at home where, you know, support to our states during emergencies, which we've seen during covid we've seen right now in California as we're flying missions and wildfires. When hurricanes come on our coast in Florida, as they did a few weeks ago, the National Guard is there. And so goes back to our motto, always ready, always there, because we have to be prepared at a moment's notice to respond. And so this not only affects national security, but it also affects homeland and our states and our communities, the security that we have there on top of the tragic challenges that it creates for our soldiers and airmen.



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**Nahaku McFadden** [00:21:09]

Thank you, sir. Moving on, we have Defense One, Tara Copp.

**Tara Copp - Defense One** [00:21:17]

Hi, thank you. I apologize, I've been trying to dial in on both the desk phone and my cell phone, so if I'm echoing, that's all on me, my apologies. Could you all of you put it in perspective. We have wildfires. We have hurricane response. There's potentially covid resurgence. How will this impact your ability to respond if this funding doesn't come through or if you have to cut training and exercises to the point where you don't have ready forces to respond? Thank you.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:21:56]

General Driscoll

**Brig Gen John Driscoll** [00:21:59]

Thank you very much, Tara, for that question. Do we look at it both through the federal lands and the state lands? The state lands? Everything we do is primarily within the state, even though we're federal force. But we still have that state nexus in our key training dollars come off of that federal training dollars, which then what happens in August and September. So we will be degrading our readiness in a sense that we'll be ready, but we won't be as ready using the analogy, hey, you know what? The game's next week, but we're not going to practice for the last five days. We can wait. And unfortunately, you know, yeah, you can still play, but you won't be at your peak. You won't be you won't be as Focus's in the game. But again, to that goal since 1636. Always ready. Always there. We will, we will. We never say no and we will make it work as we did with the capital response. We came in, we flew in twenty five thousand soldiers and that's as I looked at that number. That's phenomenal. That's more soldiers than we had on



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Utah Beach at D-Day. We did that within a two week time. So again, always ready, always there. But again, without that training, our readiness will start slipping away. And again, it goes back to that time factor. We can't get that time back. And the other part of that scheduling, these training exercises scheduled a year in advance each day plans or yearly training calendar. And when in the end, predictability is General Lyles and General Neely mentioned. Without that, it really hurts us to to go forward now. And how do we make up that training? And then as we pull it forward, what are we not doing to get caught up again? So it starts it starts accumulating effect like a snowball. If we don't get this going, can we recover? Well, absolutely. But again, will we be as ready? Definitely not.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:23:51]

Thank you, sir. General Lyles, do you have anything to add?

**Brig Gen Dale Lyles** [00:23:55]

Sure. Just very briefly, so from a National Guardsman perspective, the month of August and September are two of the highest training volume months in a National Guardsman's year. We set aside the summer months for our annual training periods. And then we have we push those into August and September because of the capacity on our ranges. So it is if you cancel an annual training period and two individual training periods the month of August and September for guardsmen, you have in essence cut almost 50 percent of their training days that prepare them to deploy domestically and internationally in response to whatever missions that the president or the governor has set up for us. So canceling August and September will degrade the proficiency of a



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guardsmen by at least 50 percent by enabling them not to do their training in August and September.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:24:56]

Thank you, sir. We're going to move on NBC News Courtney Kube. Are you here, Courtney? Nothing heard. Bloomberg, Travis Tritten.

**Travis Tritten - Bloomberg** [00:25:13]

I don't have a question. Thank you.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:25:15]

Thank you, Travis, for being here, NGAUS Magazine, Drew Brooks.

**Drew Brooks - NGAUS Magazine** [00:25:21]

Yes, thanks for doing this. Can someone go into more detail on what the loss of time and maintenance time might do for individual guardsmen and unit readiness.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:25:38]

Thank you, General Neely, would you like to begin?

**Maj Gen Rich Neely** [00:25:41]

Sure, I'd be happy to. So that's a that's a bit of a challenge, challenge, question to quantify. But what we understand is that, you know, we're talking about maintenance or our army aviation assets, our Air Force C-130, KC, 135s here in the state of Illinois, rather, we're talking about the maintenance of our vehicles. All of that takes time. And when we've mentioned along the way here is that we're going to lose that, you know, we're still working through what are these actual impacts, but with a loss of full time manning where a lot of that maintenance is done day to day, you can significantly impact not only the readiness of those those aircraft in our vehicles, but it will slow a response down in the future. And those are the key terms that we talk about, being ready, you know,





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being an operational reserve, not a strategic reserve, as we were back in the coming out of the Cold War, but an operational reserve that the deploys with the active duty components and we're depended on to be a bridge to support them for that. So that's where we see those significant impacts with readiness.

And, you know, that not only have a human face to it, but also have a readiness concern there, not only for our personnel, but our equipment as well. Hope that helps.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:27:13]

Thank you, General Lyle's.

**Brig Gen Dale Lyles** [00:27:17]

Equipment readiness on the army side will be degraded because of the full time support that's required to man the shops and the shops that actually repair and do the services and other things to our equipment. So the full timers that work in those shops could potentially be unemployed for for several pay periods because we do not have the funds to pay them. Now, that will significantly degrade the readiness of our combat vehicles and other army components in regard to our air support and air maintenance. The same thing applies that, Ridge said. The full time support that provides maintenance to the jets, to the engines, to all of the things that sustain those weapons systems could potentially also be laid off or furloughed over multiple pay periods because those are some of the accounts that we use to pay for the operation capital response. Additionally, our logistical folks are indicating that they will not be able to purchase some of the things that they had been planning on purchasing to ensure that our equipment levels were at its highest readiness in August and September and those would have to be delayed or deferred into the next fiscal year.



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**Nahaku McFadden** [00:28:39]

Thank you, sir. Moving on, a Washington Post Karoun Demirjian.

**Karoun Demirjian - Washington Post** [00:28:45]

Hi, I have a question for the the generals, especially those who were physically part of the capital response to it seems like there's pretty much agreement on both sides of the aisle that you all should be reimbursed for the work that you did. But people are getting stuck on arguing about whether there should be additional things paid for, like rapid response forces in D.C. that can be ready to go before calling in the National Guard. And did you have any opinion on on those debates, too, just given that they're part of the general stuckness of this issue that's compromising your your own units now?

**Brig Gen John Driscoll** [00:29:21]

Well, I can speak to that being on the ground, but I really can't comment because I we left in May. So all that talk of it was in the background and we were pretty much mission focused and really didn't get into that. But going up, going thinking about the soldiers coming back and to the points of our generals, just to get back into the drilling guardsmen to become that operational force, we need to get back into, like we say, back to drills, back to our mls'. Because a lot of our soldiers that went down to camp on a response, they weren't trained to be security. But it shows you the resilience of the National Guard. We are like the Swiss Army knife of the DOD, because they put us in a mission. We had truck drivers, we had mechanics, anybody other than security police, because a lot of our governors keep those military police close hold because of the civil disturbance



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aspect of what was going on in the States. We spent a lot of folks down there and they just did a phenomenal job being trained in security operations. But now they're coming back to train in their state and trying to get back into that August and September drill to really set the conditions for 2022.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:30:40]

Thank you, sir. General Neely.

**Maj Gen Rich Neely** [00:30:42]

Yes. And thank you for that that question. You know, I think what's most important is that that we wrote that the Congress really addresses the issue with a budget shortfall of the National Guard was asked to come to a mission. We were asked each one of us asked the generals and our governors received a call from the national level and was asked to support this mission at the national level, at the Capitol. And what's happened, it seems like, is that a lot of other things have got mired into that discussion. And there's a lot of really smart people looking at the best way to secure the capital. And I think it's important for the National Guard really to stay out of that conversation. That's a civilian leader decision that will be made with the best approach going forward. We responded based on the need at the time, and much like General Driscoll said, where we jump into many of these different missions when no one else is able to respond, when there's no other capacity, we use our skill sets. We haven't responded to a pandemic in 102 years, and the National Guard did some incredible things to support in many different ways during the pandemic and as well as firefighting and the response to hurricanes and all those other things that we do. And so I think it's important for us not to get to let this discussion get pulled into a discussion about



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what's the best security for Capitol Hill. It's important for leaders in Washington to figure out and at all levels to figure out how to take care of the National Guard soldiers and airmen that have supported them. Thank you.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:32:29]

Thank you, Sir. Moving on to the Hill, Rebecca Kheel.

**Rebecca Kheel - The Hill** [00:32:36]

I don't have a question today, but thank you.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:32:38]

Thank you, Rebecca. Haley Brtizky from Task and Purpose. Can you join us, Haley? Nothing heard. Do we have a WUSA TV, either Mike Vallerio or anyone else from WUSA?

**Reporter - WUSA TV Channel 9** [00:33:04]

Yes, I am here with Channel Nine. My question is, will this funding shortfall effectively certain states, but the entire national guard? And also what is the confidence level this funding will get passed?

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:33:13]

Since there's a National Guard level of a question of General Strong, do you have anything that you would like to add regarding that?

**BG Craig Strong** [00:33:28]

Yes, hi, thank you for that. Yes, overall, this will have an effect across all the 54 states, territories and the District of Columbia on the whole and for all the reasons that have been perfectly framed by General Neely, General Lyles and General Driscoll, there is an effect on their readiness accounts to train and equip the soldiers and airmen across the 54 states, territories and the District of Columbia. So, yes, there will be this impact is definitely a national situation. Over.



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**Speaker 8** [00:34:05]

Thank you, sir.

**Haley Britzky - Task & Purpose** [00:34:07]

Hi, this is Haley Britzky. Can I jump in?

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:34:11]

Go ahead.

**Haley Britzky - Task & Purpose** [00:34:12]

Yeah, thank you. Sorry, I was having a technical issue, but I believe it was General Neely and his opening remarks. He said that the lack of funding was sending a terrible message. I was just wondering if either you, General Neely, or really anyone on the call could elaborate a bit more on what that message is that you're receiving from Congress as this funding is up in the air.

**Maj Gen Rich Neely** [00:34:35]

Well, the last question really got to the question of what's the chances that the funding is going to occur and we would be having this teleconference today if we had a high confidence that we would get the funding in time. We're very concerned that the funding would come. And as I said a few minutes ago, you know, we've received incredible support from our congressional delegation. They're all very supportive of wanting to get this this money to the National Guard. They understand what we've done over the last 16, 18 months, from covid to the support of the inauguration and post six January. But the issue about the challenges or create is and I see this in the faces of my soldiers, my airmen, when I call them to duty. Right. And and we've called thousands of our soldiers and airmen from the state of Illinois to duty. And I've asked them, you know, it's we have to remember that they're part time. They're full to their full time jobs, full time commitments, full time families. And we pull them



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from their homes and we we call them to duty. And every one of them ask me the question they have when they leave their homes is when do I come back? When am I coming back? And I can't give them those answers when we respond to things like the capital mission because of this. And so we've asked them to do some incredibly difficult things over the last 18 months. And now we're turning around and saying the contract we have with you, that we will pay you for each month and you will report for drill and we'll pay you to go to training and and you have predictability, which is important for their families and employers. We're now going back on that. And I feel horrible as a leader having to go back and tell my soldiers and my airmen that I may not be able to pay them for August and September drill those those checks that they count on to not only support their families, but to feed their families and go to college and do those kind of things that our National Guard does. And so that's the concern I have, let alone our full time employees who have who came to work during a pandemic, who ensure the National Guard could deploy and support their state. They're the ones that support us. So that's really what I'm speaking to about the incredibly negative impact that will have on our not only our readiness, but on the morale and probably retention of our soldiers and airmen long term hope that helps.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:37:23]

Thank you, sir. General Lyle's.

**Brig Gen Dale Lyles** [00:37:28]

Thank you. So one of my primary responsibility for the men and women that serve in the Indiana National Guard is to ensure that I set the conditions for them to be able to train and to be manned and equipped to lead to a degree that allows them to



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respond to the president's or the governor's request to provide security to our nation or to respond to a domestic environment that's been neither made by a natural cause or manmade. In my inability to allow our soldiers to execute our airmen, to execute all of the training days that we have been allotted causes me to breach that trust with them. And so it's really a matter of trust. They our soldiers and airmen want to come to drill and they want to come to annual training periods in order that they can train to a level of proficiency so that they can serve their nation and so that they can serve their state. And not being able to do that in August and September just degrades their ability to respond. And it also harms my ability to properly lead them and provide them with what they need to be ready to go.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:38:46]

Thank you, sir. This is going to be our last question, if you have questions that perhaps we didn't get to, that you would like us to respond. You can send those to our media desk. But do we have American military news, Brian Morgan?

**Ryan Morgan - American Military News** [00:39:06]

Yeah, can you hear me? Yes, we can. OK, thank you. My question is about March, about half a march, this was two months into the capital deployment. There was a decision made to extend the mission by another two months. It's about four months of deployment. Is anyone at this time raising these budget issues, these budget concerns hey we're overstepping the budget here where we're going to run out of money later on down the road? Was anyone foreseen this issue? And I guess we're now what are you doing now to make sure these kinds of problems don't happen in the future? Make





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sure you have the feedback loop to prevent this from happening again.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:39:58]

General Strong, would you like to begin?

**BG Craig Strong** [00:40:03]

Yeah. Thank you for that question, Ryan. And during this situation and the funding requirements that have been tracked and estimated and communicated since the continuation of the mission that occurred in March, as far as the ability to address these costs as it was being cash flow through the National Guard and with the reasonable assurance that either a supplemental appropriation or a reprogramming action would satisfy the bill that was cash flow. So it has been on the radar. The balancing of the priorities across the department has been assessed and continually this cost would be addressed in some fashion for all the reasons that have been somewhat discussed earlier. And I can't I'm not in the position to discuss the legislative I don't work the Hill. So where this is in order to satisfy that cost estimate is where we're at right now. And hopefully that resolution will occur as soon as possible. I know that the prudent measures that are being taken at this point in the case of the Restoril not occurring is what we're discussing today. And as the Chief National Guard bureau has done, in order to provide proper notice to those effects and with the support of the our partners in DOD and across the 54 with the TAGs that are in position, we are looking for hopefully a resolution that would not cause undue harm, as that has been discussed throughout this call.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:42:13]

Thank you. So we're going to go through General Neely, would you like to have some parting statement?



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**Maj Gen Rich Neely** [00:42:22]

Sure, thank you for that. And, you know, just to pile on just a little bit to a General Strong stated here at the end, I think it's important to note that with the response to the national capital mission, this was the first time something like this has happened. It was emergency, much like a 9/11 type of an event where planning hadn't been in place to how we would fund this. And I can strongly say that we've had great discussions between the chiefs, the National Guard bureau and the generals and the governors, too. And there was a high confidence that the reimbursement would be coming. And it's unfortunate that other things have slowed it down. But I do want to say thank you to all those that joined us today for taking the time to try to understand this complex story a little bit more. This is about our America's best, right? Those service members that raise put their hand up and raise and take an oath to the Constitution that say they will serve. It's about keeping their trust and confidence in a system, in their National Guard, in their leadership, as as General Lyles mentioned earlier, that is so significant to make sure that that they did their part. They reported when they were supposed to. They've responded in incredible ways over the last 18 months. And it's up to us to try to find a way to ensure that they're able to drill, that we're continuing on a readiness, that we're able to continue to support not only our national missions, but respond in our states if there's an emergency in the National Guard, is needed. So, again, thank you for joining us today.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:44:20]

Thank you, sir. General Lyle.



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**Brig Gen Dale Lyles** [00:44:24]

I'll just conclude with restoring the funds that we cash flow in order to sustain the operation, capital response will ensure that the National Guard is ready to respond to a domestic disaster or an international disaster and to meet the requirements of our nation and to provide the security apparatus that we are charged with providing. And doing that in August, September will go a long ways of ensuring that we are able to do that. Thank you.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:44:56]

General Driscoll,

**Brig Gen John Driscoll** [00:44:58]

Thank you very much again to everybody joining us today and the luck to tackle everything that's been said so far. Restoring the funding is not only taking care of the soldiers, it's taking care of their families. It's renewing that faith and confidence that they have that we're always going to be always ready, always there, and also for their employers who made their sacrifices, too. So I have to get that in there because we can't do what we do without the support of the families, but also the employers. So, again, restoring that funding just makes it right. And this restores the faith and confidence and trust in our soldiers and gives them that training to exude that confidence. So from the governor's call, when the president calls will always be ready, always there since 1636. Thank you.

**Nahaku McFadden** [00:45:43]

Thank you to everyone who attended. This concludes our media roundtable and have a great day. Thank you so much.

**Duration: 00:45:43 minutes and 43 seconds**

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